

From: Bill McAuley On Behalf Of PSIO-Intelligence

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To: Amanda Barros <Amanda.Barros@gov.ab.ca>; Andrew Buffin <Andrew.Buffin@gov.ab.ca>; Bill McAuley <bill.mcauley@gov.ab.ca>; Brandy Cox <brandy.cox@gov.ab.ca>; Catherine Williams <catherine.williams@gov.ab.ca>; Coleen Volk <Coleen.Volk@gov.ab.ca>; Dennis Cooley <Dennis.Cooley@gov.ab.ca>; Dwayne Lakusta <Dwayne.Lakusta@gov.ab.ca>; Elliott Houle <Elliott.Houle@gov.ab.ca>; Farooq Sheikh <Farooq.Sheikh@gov.ab.ca>; Frank Bosscha <Frank.Bosscha@gov.ab.ca>; Jenn Anderson <Jenn.Anderson@gov.ab.ca>; Kate White <Kate.White@gov.ab.ca>; Leah Sheffield <Leah.Sheffield@gov.ab.ca>; Marlin Degrand <Marlin.Degrand@gov.ab.ca>; Pam Livingston <Pam.Livingston@gov.ab.ca>; Paul Wynnyk <Paul.Wynnyk@gov.ab.ca>; Peter Lemieux <peter.lemieux@gov.ab.ca>; PSIO-Intelligence <PSIO-Intelligence@gov.ab.ca>; Rae-Ann Lajeunesse <rae-ann.lajeunesse@gov.ab.ca>; Ranjit Tharmalingam <Ranjit.Tharmalingam@gov.ab.ca>; Ray Gilmour <Ray.Gilmour@gov.ab.ca>; Riley Braun <Riley.Braun@gov.ab.ca>; Shannon Marchand <shannon.marchand@gov.ab.ca>; Tara Jago <Tara.Jago@gov.ab.ca>

Subject: PSIO SITREP UPDATE #5 – 6 Feb 2022 – Freedom Convoy Solidarity Activity

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION ONLY: SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS SITUATION DEVELOPS. INFORMATION MAY BE BASED ON UNCONFIRMED REPORTING.

UPDATE #4

DATE/TIME: February 6, 2022 @ 1000 hrs

PURPOSE: To provide aggregated situational awareness regarding “Freedom Convoy” solidarity activity impacting Alberta.

BACKGROUND: Aggregate reporting indicates significant participation in overall peaceful protests throughout province on Sat 5 Feb 2022.

CURRENT STATUS:

Coutts Border Crossing

- As of 09:58 hrs Sat 6 Feb, RCMP report cross boarder movement is traffic is flowing; however, it is/can be very slow. CBSA and US Boarder Patrol provided a rough estimate of a 90% reduction from regular traffic volume. Two sites affecting flow are Checkpoint 10 (CP10) at Milk River and Coutts. CP 10 is the main cause of the delay and wait times can be two to three hours when line-ups develop.
- Social media activity indicates some individual participants departing Milk River area during evening of Sat 5 Feb; however, commentary continues to encourage supporters to rally in Milk River at 12:00 hrs daily and convoy together to the Police Check Point.
- Supporters’ social media content posted in early hours of Sun 6 Feb is generally portraying a carnival-like (‘Fringe Festival’) atmosphere in the Milk River area.
- Some indicators of small groups moving towards Milk River / Coutts from Edmonton on evening of Sat 5 Feb. A convoy of 30-40 people were travelling Edmonton to Milk River was reported to have reached Lethbridge as of 18:00 Sat 5 Feb. [current whereabouts unknown]
- Supporters of the Coutts/Milk River action appear to be planning a resupply convoy for Sun 06 February from Lethbridge. The convoy will be collecting food and supplies at the Real Canadian Superstore (3515 Mayor Magrath Dr S). The group intends to loop around Lethbridge (via Mayor

Magrath Drive, Hwy 3, and Scenic Dr South) 3 times counter clockwise before departing for Milk River/Coutts. [unconfirmed]

- Approximately 400 horseback riders ("Alberta (Coutts) Freedom Horseback Riders 2022") attended Milk River/Coutts action on Sat 5 Feb. [corroborated by multiple sources]
- Some social media support commentary around law enforcement recording driver licence information as they pass through Check Points on way to Milk River.
- The Coutts Convoy 2022 social media discussion page indicates some sharing of anti-vaccine misinformation common amongst the broader anti-PHO crowd.

Alberta Legislature / McDougall Centre

- As of 09:19 hrs Sun 6 Feb, Sheriffs report:
 - No campers / overnight occupancy was observed and no reportable incidents in relation to Legislature Campus.
 - Roadblocks came down at 20:30 hrs Sat 5 Feb.
 - Additional resources monitored campus till midnight.
- Robust Sheriff presence on campus, working with EPS. Roadblocks will be deployed and maintained as required today.

City of Edmonton & Environs

- As of 19:09 hrs Sat 5 Feb, EPS report:
 - Some mischief (fireworks, flares, open alcohol) by protest stragglers. [This is common pattern, as disruptive behaviour tends to commence once family participants have dispersed.]
 - An over height commercial vehicle attempted to transit the High Level Bridge, causing a large traffic disruption.
 - Traffic was otherwise calm in all other areas of the city.

City of Calgary & Environs

- Social media postings indicate intent for a "Freedom's Second Wave" convoy to depart Calgary for Ottawa at 1000 hrs Sun 6 Feb. Starting point is indicated as Flying J Travel Centre (11511 40 St. SE). [support likely to be minimal - unconfirmed]
- A 'Foothills Freedom Protest' is being promoted for 13:00 hrs Sun 6 Feb at Olde Towne Plaza (50 McRae St) in Okotoks. Street Pastor Art Pawlowski is indicated as a speaker. A 'Foothills Freedom Slow-Roll' commencing at 11:45 hrs at Dawgs Stadium is intended to feed into the rally. [minimal participation anticipated]

Regional Municipalities / Rural

- Some residual social media chatter advocating protesters to set up choke points and 'cut Alberta off'. [Assessed as aspirational/non-tangible]

Ottawa "Freedom Convoy 2022"

- The Ottawa Police Service and its partners continue to implement a surge and contain strategy focused on preventing and reducing the impacts of demonstrators entering the downtown core, and improving neighbourhood safety.
- As of 16:30 Sat 5 Feb, Ottawa Police report:
 - Responding to 400 calls for service in relation to the demonstration since they began.
 - In total, over 50 criminal offences are being investigated- 11 of those were hate crimes which resulted in charges against four people.
 - Seven people have been arrested and 70 traffic violation tickets have been issued so far.
 - An estimated 500 heavy vehicles associated with the demonstration are in the red zone.
 - Concrete barriers and heavy equipment barricades remain in place throughout Centretown, Lowertown, ByWard Market, Sandy Hill and the Glebe.
 - Intelligence and evidence gathering teams continue to collect financial, digital, vehicle registration, driver identification, insurance status, and other related evidence that will be used in criminal prosecutions.
 - The Ottawa Police Service is actively working with U.S. authorities to investigate email-based threats to public officials.
 - The Hate related Hotline has received over 150 calls, and detectives are ensuring every report is investigated.
 - All available Ottawa Police Service officers remain on active duty, with a focus on patrolling and addressing unlawful and threatening conduct in: Centretown, Sandy Hill, Lowertown and the ByWard Market.
 - An additional 257 RCMP officers are being sworn in with Special Constable Status in order to further assist with demonstration enforcement.
- The substitute GiveSendGo campaign in support of the Ottawa convoy has reached \$2.66M.

Other Provinces / National

- Not assessed at this time.

MINISTRY UPDATES:

Justice & Solicitor General (JSG):

- No change.

Transportation (TRANS):

- No change.

Municipal Affairs:

- The Provincial Operations Centre (POC) deescalated back to a Level I at approximately 19:00 hrs on Sat 5 Feb. The POC will continue to monitor the ongoing situation.
- COVID-19 Current State (as of 3 Feb): 1,584 individuals hospitalized; 118 individuals in ICU; 32,711 active cases; 33.6% testing positivity rate.

Jobs, Economy, and Innovation (JEI):

- No change

Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Economic Development (AFRED):

- No change

ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS:

- The centre of gravity of protest has shifted away from the Coutts Blockade/Occupation element, and towards the more transient Milk River activities. Indicators suggest Coutts activity is organically shifting focus from internal blockade/occupation objectives (i.e., sustain and resupply) to broader external influence objectives. Activities in vicinity of Police Check Points now appear intended primarily to provide visual content to influence broader media/online messaging being propagated regionally using tags [#westandwithcoutts], [#albertastrong], [#gridlockalberta] and nationally via tags [#holdtheline], [#slowroll], [#freedomconvoy2022], [#ENDTHEMANDATES].
- Although large numbers of vehicles entered the City of Edmonton on Sat 5 Feb, a significant dismounted rally on the Legislature Grounds did not materialize. Dismounted activity appears to have been centered on 109 Street, and was a fraction of number encounter at the Legislature on 29 Jan. This is likely as a result of effective traffic management by EPS and Sheriffs, coupled with the absence of organized political activity. The Peoples Party of Canada's National Coordinator was involved in organizing the 29 Jan rally at the Legislature that attracted approximately 9000 persons. PPC efforts on 5 Feb appear to have been focussed on Calgary, providing amplification and support for the 'Alberta United for Freedom Rally & March' originating in Central Memorial Park. Calgary Police Service indicated peak estimate of 3000-4000 at this event, while less than 300 appear to have attended the Legislature grounds. Most participants in Edm stayed on sidewalks outside Legislature Campus. PPC amplification and support also appears to have some correlation with turnout in BC and Ontario. This suggests that PPC organizing activity may provide a partial indicator of level and nature of participation in regional/local 'Freedom Convoy' solidarity activities.

FORECAST:

- Continuance of significant protest activity at Legislature on Sun 6 Feb appears highly unlikely.
- Coutts Border Crossing interference appears to maintain significant local support. Will be main point of concern for 6 Feb.

PREPARED BY: Intelligence Bureau, Provincial Security & Intelligence Office (PSIO)

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- **RCMP:** KDEOC//KDCAS

CONTACT: PSIO-Intelligence@gov.ab.ca

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